

UNIFORMS AND SPECIAL CLOTHING FOR NATIONAL CEMETERY EMPLOYEES

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: To establish National Cemetery System (NCS) procedures for wearing uniforms and special clothing in VA national cemeteries.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES

a. This handbook prescribes procedures related to the wearing of uniforms and special clothing in VA national cemeteries. This handbook (Part V) is the first part in the Administrative Operations handbook to be published. The statutory authority for this handbook is stated in title 38, United States Code, sections 2400(a) and 2404(a).

b. This handbook includes a change from previous uniform procedures. The uniform purchase policy now permits NCS to furnish uniforms to employees, who have the collateral duty of Cemetery Representative, at NCS expense. This change is incorporated in section II, 1.d. This change will also be incorporated into NCS Directive 3010, Administrative Operations.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: The Office of Field Operations (401), National Cemetery System, is responsible for the material contained in this handbook.

4. RELATED DIRECTIVE: NCS Directive 3010, Administrative Operations.

5. RESCISSIONS: NCS M40-2, Change 1, National Cemeteries Administration, Operation and Maintenance, dated June 1, 1987, Chapter 28, Uniforms and Special Clothing.

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PART V

UNIFORMS AND SPECIAL CLOTHING FOR NATIONAL CEMETERY EMPLOYEES

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PART V

SECTION I -- INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This handbook contains procedures for wearing uniforms and special clothing in national cemeteries and identifies the responsibilities of National Cemetery System (NCS) Cemetery Directors and cemetery personnel relating to uniforms and special clothing.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CEMETERY DIRECTORS

Cemetery Directors are responsible for ensuring that all requirements pertaining to uniforms and special clothing contained in this handbook are followed by each employee. National Cemetery Area Office (NCAO) Directors will approve increases of allocations, types of outer coats, and deviations from policy.

SECTION II -- APPAREL

1. GENERAL SCHEDULE EMPLOYEES

a. All General Schedule (GS) employees will wear appropriate attire.

b. Under special conditions, and with the approval of the NCAO Director, the Cemetery Director may deviate from business attire. Examples of this are to meet local attire customs such as in Hawaii or Puerto Rico, or the southern and western areas of the contiguous United States where other styles of clothing are accepted. Extreme weather conditions affecting outside work may also dictate deviation from normal business attire - such as relief from jacket and/or tie during very high temperature and humidity or use of parkas and winter wear during sub-zero conditions. Conversely, business attire should be immediately available in case the need arises.

c. NCS may provide a uniform or distinctive items of clothing for Cemetery Representatives or other employees who act as collateral duty Cemetery Representatives so they will present a uniform appearance at committal services. This will help members of the funeral party to recognize cemetery employees during funeral processions and committal services.

d. NCS will issue on a loan basis the following items to Cemetery Representatives and other employees who act as collateral duty Cemetery Representatives: (Standard uniform issue - approval to increase the allocation or change the color of uniforms must be justified and approved by the NCAO Director to meet local conditions.)

Male:

Blazer, Navy Blue (Minimum 2);
Trousers, Gray (Minimum 2);
Shoes, Safety, Black (1 pair);
Tie, Maroon or Navy Blue (Minimum 2 ties);
Name Tag (Minimum 2); and,
Outer Coat suitable for weather conditions (one each type as approved by NCAO Director).

Female:

Blazer, Navy Blue (Minimum 2);
Slacks or Skirt, Gray (Minimum 2);
Shoes, Safety, Black (1 pair);
Name Tag (Minimum 2); and,
Outer Coat suitable for weather conditions (one each type as approved by NCAO Director).

e. Cemetery Representatives and other employees who act as collateral duty Cemetery Representatives will provide the following items of clothing to be worn with the uniform: (These items must be suitable for wear with the uniform.)

Dark hose or socks.

A shirt or blouse of appropriate color to be worn with the navy blue/gray uniform.

f. Any other item worn by Cemetery Representatives or other employees who act as collateral duty Cemetery Representatives must be compatible with mandatory NCS-furnished items.

g. All GS employees in contact with the public will wear a name plate or name badge, as approved by the Cemetery Director.

2. WAGE GRADE EMPLOYEES

a. Wage Grade (WG) employees, including temporary employees whose appointment exceeds 90 days, will wear, while on duty, work clothing that is uniform in design and color. The color may be appropriate for the area and season. To facilitate adherence, each WG employee will be issued on a loan basis the following items:

- Trousers or slacks, long leg (minimum 5 pair)
- Shirts, short or long sleeves (minimum 5 each)
- Jacket, style suitable for prevailing weather conditions, e.g. windbreaker, parka, (1 each style)
- Shoes, Safety (1 pair)
- One-piece coveralls, authorized by Cemetery Director (1 each)
- Hat or cap, style suitable for prevailing weather conditions, e.g., baseball style, watch cap (1 each)

b. NCS-furnished clothing, including outerwear, will be worn only in the performance of official duties. It is mandatory that the employee wear the provided uniform.

c. Foremen (WS) may wear distinctive uniform items such as different colored shirts for easy recognition.

d. Cemeteries may provide coveralls for mechanics, maintenance mechanics, and gardeners to provide additional protection from grease, lubricants, ground chemicals and the like. These coveralls are in addition to the regular uniform and should be used only where additional protection is required.

3. SPECIAL CLOTHING FOR EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

Cemeteries where sub-zero temperatures are common in the winter may procure Arctic-type outer clothing garments, including coveralls, headwear, face covers, gloves and footwear for employees assigned functions or tasks which will expose them to elements for prolonged periods of time. The color of these items should match the uniform color whenever possible. Special clothing may be worn only in performance of official duties and only on those days when the outside temperature dictates.

4. VOLUNTEERS

a. Uniforms or work clothing will not be furnished to volunteers or workers who receive a stipend or salary from a source other than VA.

b. Volunteers who are in contact with the public will be furnished a name tag or name badge to wear while on duty.

c. Volunteers will be provided any required special clothing if they are performing tasks that require protection from hazardous items. This will include such items as rubber or latex gloves, work gloves (cotton or leather) or coveralls.

5. ISSUING AND MAINTENANCE

a. Required items of clothing can be provided either through purchase or by a contract with a uniform vendor to rent uniforms. When the clothing is purchased, it is up to the employee to launder and maintain the items in proper condition. Items requiring dry cleaning will be cleaned at NCS expense. Purchased clothing will be altered and/or repaired at the employee's expense.

b. Purchased items of NCS-issued clothing will be replaced for fair wear and tear on an item-for-item basis as determined by Cemetery Directors.

- c. Authorized NCS-furnished clothing items remain the property of VA and must be returned when no longer required for official duty. Employees will be required to reimburse VA for loss or damage caused by their own negligence.
- d. VA Form 10-1148, Employees Uniform and Property Issue Card, or an approved computer inventory system, will be used to account for all NCS-furnished clothing including safety and protective clothing.

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